



52nd Human Rights Council session

9 March 2023, 15:00hr

ITEM 3 – Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment

Statement by International Lesbian and Gay Association

Delivered by Alejandra Fierro Castro

Mr. President,

We strongly welcome the gender-sensitive approach implemented by the Special Rapporteur in his report and the interlinkages made with environmental sustainability. We believe that the systems that exploit nature cause several forms of discrimination and oppression of vulnerable groups, such as indigenous communities and women in all their diversity.

We also celebrate that the mandate recognizes the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that women face due to their sexual orientation and gender identity. However, the report could have benefited from more data on LBT+ women when referring to central information. For instance, LGBT+ groups face an increasing environmental burden due to the high levels of discrimination in housing, health, and employment systems, which limits their capacity to respond properly to the environmental crisis. Moreover, same-sex households experience high exposure to air pollution due to discriminatory housing policies, which might push LGBT+ persons, especially racialized LGBT+ groups, to inhabit low-income neighborhoods plagued by toxic industries¹. In fact, cancer, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, are found at a high rate among these groups². Additionally, during environmental disasters, trans persons are more

¹ Timothy W. Collins, Sara E. Grineski & Danielle X. Morales. (2017). [Sexual Orientation, Gender, and Environmental Injustice: Unequal Carcinogenic Air Pollution Risks in Greater Houston](#). Annals of the American Association of Geographers. Volume 107, Issue 1. DOI: 10.1080/24694452.2016.1218270

² Leo Goldsmith & Michelle L. Bell. (2021). [Queering Environmental Justice: Unequal Environmental Health Burden on the LGBTQ+ Community](#). American Public Health Association. Volume 112. DOI: org.10.2105/AJPH.2021.306406

vulnerable to experiencing gender-based violence and exposure to harmful diseases due to their high risk of homelessness³.

We recommend the Special Rapporteur implement a deeper analysis of the intersection between gender, SOGI and, ethnicity. Indigenous women girls and persons with diverse and ancestral sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, and sex characteristics⁴ have a pivotal role in the designing and executing of climate-change policies and programs. These communities are heavily impacted by predatory colonial and capitalist systems that drive climate change and destroy ecosystems. Particularly, trans indigenous groups are continuously affected in their physical and mental health by the outcomes of environmental disasters, pollution due to large-scale development projects, high poverty rates, and exclusion generated by harmful gender norms and stereotypes.

Lastly, we ask the Special Rapporteur how will he engage with LGBTI+ women and girls from underrepresented regions and consult on their environmental sustainability perspectives?

I thank you Mr. President

³ Ibid.

⁴ For instance, the Special Rapporteur could also consider for upcoming reports the situation and examples of indigenous groups that move away from the gendered and sexual binary and that hold important social and spiritual positions in many cultures (Eg. Muxes in Mexico, Hijras in India and South Asia, or Two Spirit communities in North America).